retreat had begun, and the martial ardor, which, so long as the actual fighting was in progress, took the place of discipline, had subsided, that the strangeness of the situation and the almost utter lack of military associations and habits allowed the men to become a prey to their heated and excited imaginations, and produced in time a veritable panic. The battalion of regular infantry under Major Sykes, it may be remarked, was wholly unaffected by the general demoralization.

McDowell endeavored to make a stand at Centreville, but he found it was useless to attempt to do so. The men could not be stopped. He had to content himself with protecting the rear with the three brigades of Blenker, Davies and Richardson. These troops were unmoved by the imaginary terrors of their unfortunate comrades ; they constituted a formidable rear-guard, and prevented the victory from being followed up.

Such was the first battle of Bull Run. Its chief importance lies in its being the first of the battles of the civil war. It possesses, when viewed in this light, a sort of romantic interest. The participants in it had not had time to become soldiers; they had not learned the trade of war; they were (the regulars, of course, apart) civilians, animated,—both

sides equally so,—by patriotic motives,—equally determined to fight to the best of their ability for their respective countries. The reports of the various generals on both Bides abound with kindly and admiring references to the gallantry of these brave volunteers, who in the midst of these novel and terrifying